

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): A method of producing a tubular threaded joint including a male tubular element having a conical male thread, a female tubular element having a conical female thread that interacts by screwing with the male thread, and a deformable sealing ring interposed between the male and female elements so to oppose communication of fluid between an outside of the tubular joint and a zone of interaction of the male and female threads, the sealing ring being in sealed contact with the male thread, and the female element having an annular housing to receive the sealing ring, disposed axially between its free end and the female thread and limited axially by a first shoulder facing the free end, the sealing ring bearing axially against the first shoulder and being in sealed contact with a peripheral surface of the housing, the method comprising:

placing a deformable sealing ring around the male thread;

thereafter engaging the free end of the male element; and

screwing the male thread into the female thread, the sealing ring, during the screwing, being pushed along the male element by the first shoulder, rotated by the female element and compressed radially between the male thread, into which it is pressed, and the peripheral surface of the housing.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the sealing ring is made of a material chosen from synthetic materials, malleable metals, and composite materials.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the sealing ring is made of a material having a low coefficient of friction with the material of the male element.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the sealing ring is made of filled or unfilled polytetrafluoroethylene.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein:
the male thread comprises at an end opposite the free end of the male element of the threads diminishing threads whose radial height diminishes from a nominal value to a zero value, and

the sealing ring is in sealed contact with the diminishing threads over at least a portion of its axial length.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the sealing ring is in contact with the diminishing threads over all its axial length.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the sealing ring is placed around the diminishing threads.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the male element is machined at a region, over at least a fraction of an axial length of the diminishing threads, to a constant diameter greater than a diameter of troughs of the threads concerned.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the sealing ring is placed around the region of the male element machined to a constant diameter.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the housing includes a second shoulder axially facing the first shoulder and with a minimal diameter greater than that of the first shoulder, a portion of a volume of the sealing ring being compressed axially between the first and second shoulders.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein at least one of the first and second shoulders is inclined relative to the axis of the threads.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the housing emerges at the free end of the female element in a flare.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the male element includes, in a vicinity of its free end, an axial abutment surface configured to interact with an axial abutment surface of the female element to limit the screwing.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, further comprising additional sealing means for preventing any communication of fluid between the interior of the tubular joint and the zone of interaction of the threads.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the sealing ring is screwed onto the male thread.

Claim 38 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the sealing ring is placed around the male thread at a temperature such that its internal diameter is greater than the external diameter of underlying threads, its internal diameter being less than an external diameter of the underlying threads at ambient temperature.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the sealing ring is an O-ring of rectangular section elongated in the axial direction.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The method as claimed in claim 39, wherein an external diameter of the sealing ring after being placed around the male thread is less than a minimal radius of the peripheral surface of the housing.

Claims 41-48 (Canceled).

Claim 49 (New): A tubular threaded joint comprising:

a male tubular element having a conical male thread;

a female tubular element having a conical female thread which interacts by screwing with the male thread; and

a deformable sealing ring which interposes after tightening between the male and female elements in such a way as to oppose the communication of fluid between the outside of the tubular joint and the zone of interaction of said threads,

the female element having an annular housing disposed axially between its free end and the female thread and axially limited by a first shoulder facing said free end,

wherein the deformable sealing ring is fixed on the male element to be in sealed contact with the male thread, in that the external diameter before insertion of the ring is

slightly less than the internal diameter of the housing, so that during tightening, the housing receives the sealing ring which bears axially against the first shoulder and comes into sealed contact with the peripheral surface of the housing.

Claim 50 (New): The tubular threaded joint as claimed in claim 49, wherein the first and second shoulders are respectively perpendicular to the axis of the threads and inclined relative to the latter.

Claim 51 (New): The tubular threaded joint as claimed in claim 49, wherein the housing has a diameter constantly increasing toward the free end of the female element, its peripheral wall being greatly inclined relative to the axis of the threads at the end opposite the free end to form a shoulder capable of pushing the sealing ring during screwing of the threaded elements, and its angle then decreasing progressively.

Claim 52 (New): the tabular threaded joint as claimed in claim 49, wherein a flare and the first shoulder are connected together by a cylindrical surface.